

Getting More From Your Subject Guides by Going 2.0

Sara E. Morris, Librarian for American History, University of Kansas, semorris@ku.edu
Darcy Del Bosque, Web Services Librarian, University of Nevada, Las Vegas,
darcy.delbosque@unlv.edu

Best Practices

- Don't hide the guide! Make sure there is an obvious link from the homepage.
- Brand guides so they are easy to promote.
- Remember to refer to subject guides in other tools utilized by the library. Mention them on the library's blog or put a link on the Facebook page.
- Publicize your guides often. Show them in instruction sessions and at the Reference Desk.
- Organize guides for easy navigation.
- Be concise, not comprehensive. These are resources to aid in starting research.
- Individuality is good, but so is consistency. Keep guides similar enough so patrons recognize them as authoritative sources from your library.
- Leave out the jargon. Use terminology everyone can understand.
- Don't fix 'em and forget 'em. Aim to update, modify, and check links at least twice a year.
- Forget PDFs, they are harder to keep updated. 2.0 technologies like wikis, blogs, and subject guide software make updating easy; even a novice can do it.
- Work with faculty to make new guides and incorporate them into classroom activities.
- Help patrons to get to know librarians and their areas of expertise. Provide relevant contact information, even a photo so patrons can recognize you!
- Assess your guides yearly. Are they getting used, who is using them, are they helpful?

Tips When Adding 2.0 to Your Guides

- Be selective. Only use 2.0 technologies that enhance a guide. If there is no added benefit leave it off.
- Evaluate potential platforms for patrons and librarians.
 - Features to look out for:
 - Ease of updating
 - Searchable
 - Interactive
- Experiment. Web 2.0 tools are usually free or inexpensive. You can always remove features that aren't successful.
- Collaborate. Include patrons.
 - Create ways for patrons to add or suggest content. They might know a great resource you are unfamiliar with.
 - Promote guides during instruction classes and at the reference desk. Challenge a class to create a collection of websites for their assignments using Delicious or a similar technology.
 - Let patrons comment on the usefulness of resources. People love to share their opinions.
- Incorporate a chat widget on each guide! Make it easy for patrons to reach you and get help if they need it.
- Repurpose what you are already doing. Have a blog, chat widget, or interactive tutorial already on the library's website? Use that content for your subject guide.

Getting More From Your Subject Guides by Going 2.0

5 Web 2.0 Resources for Creating Subject Guides

1. Chat

- **Meebo** www.meebo.com
- **Qwidget** http://questionpoint.blogs.com/questionpoint_247_referen/2008/01/introducing-qwi.html
- **PLUGOO** <http://www.plugoo.com/>

2. Podcasting

- **Gibson D. Lewis Health Science Library**
<http://library.hsc.unt.edu/guides/podcasts.cfm>
- **Emory University Library Survival Guide**
<http://guides.main.library.emory.edu/podcast>
- **Audacity** <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>

3. Social Bookmarking

- **Delicious** <http://delicious.com/>
- **digg** <http://digg.com/>
- **Google Bookmarks** <http://www.google.com/bookmarks/>
- **The College of New Jersey Library Modern Languages Guide**
<http://www.tcnj.edu/~library/moulaison/index.html>
- **North Metro Technical College Librarian's Bookmarks**
http://delicious.com/nmtc_Librarian
- **Saskatoon Health Region Nutrition Subject Guide**
<http://www.lib.sk.ca/shr/lib/infoguides/Nutrition.htm>

4. Video

- **E.H. Butler Library Political Science Subject Guide**
<http://library.buffalostate.edu/subjects/display.php?subject=POL>
- **MIT University Children's Literature Subject Guide**
<http://rmit.libguides.com/content.php?pid=10132>
- **How to Search JSTOR (YouTube)** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZSZJk2aadE>
- **JING** <http://www.jingproject.com/>
- **Trinity Western University JING video**
<http://www.screencast.com/users/AskAway/folders/TWU/media/ca17c018-451e-45a7-9080-9e5a2f952bb4>

5. RSS

- **Birmingham Public Library**
http://www.bplonline.org/virtual/subjects/Default.aspx?s_page=85
- **UNLV Libraries Hospitality Subject Guide** <http://guides.library.unlv.edu/hospitality>
- **American University in Cairo Engineering Subject Guide**
<http://libguides.aucegypt.edu/engineering>

More 2.0 to try:

- **Blogs:** put your blogs RSS feed (blogs can be liaison updates, library news, new books, and more) on your page to keep your patrons continually updated.
 - Hosted: **Blogger** (<https://www.blogger.com/>), **Live Journal** (<http://www.livejournal.com/>), **TypePad** (fee- <http://www.typepad.com/>)

Getting More From Your Subject Guides by Going 2.0

- Installed: **MovableType** (<http://www.movabletype.org/>), **WordPress** (<http://wordpress.com/>- hosted version available)
 - **Twitter** <http://twitter.com>, feed your tweets to your subject guide. Sometimes known as “microblogging”, Twitter lets you post short text updates.
 - **Flickr** <http://www.flickr.com/> , post pictures to your guides.
 - **polldaddy** <http://www.polldaddy.com/>, poll your patrons from your subject guides.
 - **Google Gadgets** <http://www.google.com/ig/directory?synd=open>, lots of available widgets to incorporate into your guide or make your own widget that patrons can download from your subject guide.

5 Resources for Creating Complete Subject Guides

1. Wikis

- **pbwiki** (<http://pbwiki.com/academic.wiki>), **wetpaint** (<http://www.wetpaint.com/>), **Wikispaces** (<http://www.wikispaces.com/>), **MediaWiki** (<http://www.mediawiki.org/wiki/MediaWiki>)
- **Ohio University's Biz Wiki**
http://www.library.ohiou.edu/subjects/bizwiki/index.php/Main_Page
- **Pendergrass Library Veterinary Wiki**
<http://sites.google.com/site/clinicalproject/Home>
- **Wiki Matrix** <http://www.wikimatrix.org/>

2. Squidoo (<http://www.squidoo.com/>)

- **LIS 753** <http://www.squidoo.com/LIS753Dom>
- **Salem- South Lyon Library District Career Resources**
<http://www.squidoo.com/careerinfo>

3. SubjectsPlus (<http://ithacalibrary.com/subsplus/>)

- **Colgate Univesrity Libraries Asian Studies Guide**
http://cu-cel.org/library/psource/subjects/index.php?gen_id=6
- **Ithaca College Computer Science Guide** <http://www.ithacalibrary.com/subjects/cs>

4. Library á la Carte (<http://alacarte.library.oregonstate.edu/about>)

- **Oregon State list of guides** <http://ica.library.oregonstate.edu/subject-guides>
- **California State University San Marcos Political Science Guide**
http://library.csusm.edu/subject_guides/political_science/

5. LibGuides (<http://www.springshare.com/libguides/>)

- **Cornell University Oral Communication Guide**
<http://guides.library.cornell.edu/comm2010>
- **Burlington County Library System Guides Page** <http://explore.bcls.lib.nj.us/>

3 More to Try

- **LibData** <http://libdata.sourceforge.net/>
- **MyLibrary** <http://mylibrary.library.nd.edu/>
- **ResearchGuide** <http://researchguide.sourceforge.net/>